

Western Snowy Plover

Charadrius alexandrinus



Snowy Plover by James Coe

Breeding plumage

Identification Tips:

- Length: 5.25 inches
- Small shorebird
- Short, fairly thin, dark bill
- Legs black
- Black bar at side of breast
- White forehead and supercilium
- Black patches above white forehead and behind eye
- Pale gray upperparts
- White underparts
- Gray upperparts and white underparts
- Basic and juvenile plumages are similar to adult but black patches are absent

Similar species:

In all plumages, the similarly-sized Semipalmated Plover has a complete breast band.



Western Snowy Plover chick

When approached by predators, adult Snowy Plovers will usually run from their nest. They will fly when surprised, though. While running, they may also lower their tail to the ground or flap their wings to feign injury. Snowy Plovers will crouch in their nest when Peregrine Falcons fly overhead. Adults with chicks will react with calls when approached by possible predators, and they will sometimes do this while flying back and forth. Small chicks will usually crouch and remain motionless when approached by predators, whereas older chicks will often run with their parent.